

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

28 January 2009

WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY
ISSUES AND OPTIONS – FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND
SUGGESTED PREFERRED STRATEGIC ALLOCATION FOR WINCHESTER
TOWN

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Contact Officer: Jenny Nell Tel No: 01962 848 278 email
jnell@winchester.gov.uk

RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB1568(LDF) – Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) - 6 December 2007

CAB1696(LDF) – Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Initial Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) - 15 July 2008

CAB1728(LDF) - Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 21 October 2008

CAB1743(LDF) - Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 12 November 2008

CAB 1772(LDF) - Winchester District Local Development Framework – Core Strategy Issues and Options – Feedback on Consultation (Cabinet (Local Development Framework Committee) – 16 December 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report draws together the results of the consultation exercise carried out at the beginning of 2008 with regard to the responses received in respect of the strategic site allocations proposed around Winchester Town and suggests which sites should be allocated in the Core Strategy in light of the previously agreed development strategy for the Town - CAB 1772(LDF) refers.

A further report will be made to cover the strategic allocations within the M27 corridor urban areas. An additional meeting of this Committee has been arranged for Thursday 12 February 2009 at 10.00am to consider this further report. No strategic allocations are proposed with the Market Towns and Rural Area.

These strategic allocations for Winchester Town are set out within Appendix A to this report.

In addition there are a small number of general representations which remain to be considered by Members and these are set out at Appendix B.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the recommended strategic site allocations in relation to Winchester Town (in respect of Barton Farm and Bushfield Camp as set out in Paragraph 5.8 of the report) and the recommended approach in Appendix A be agreed and incorporated when developing the 'Preferred Options' version of the Core Strategy for consultation, and that the responses to the general comments be noted.

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WINCHESTER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – CORE STRATEGY ISSUES AND OPTIONS – FEEDBACK ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND SUGGESTED PREFERRED STRATEGIC ALLOCATION FOR WINCHESTER TOWN

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Committee has previously been presented (Reports CAB 1728(LDF),1743(LDF) and 1772(LDF) refer) with an analysis of a number of the matters covered by the Core Strategy.

2 Assessment of Responses

- 2.1 Due to complexity of the Core Strategy and the many matters examined in it, this report only includes those elements that relate to the allocation of strategic sites around Winchester Town, together with a brief assessment of a small number of general comments that were received to the Issues and Options consultation but which could not be attributed to a specific part of that paper.
- 2.2 Due to their size, the background papers and supporting documents can be viewed on the Council's website:
www.winchester.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planning/localdevelopmentframework

3 Winchester District Housing Requirement 2006 -2026

- 3.1 The draft South East Plan (SEP) requires 12, 740 new dwellings to be provided in the Winchester District in the twenty year period from 2006 to 2026 (Secretary of State's Proposed Changes, July 2008). This figure is then apportioned to 6740 in that part of the District that falls within the PUSH sub-region and 6000 for the rest of the District. Taking into account completions (2006-2008); SHLAA; large/small site commitments and a small site allowance there is a need to allocate land for some 3500-4000 dwellings within the PUSH part of the District and 2000-2500 in the rest of the District. This report considers the strategic allocations for the non-PUSH part of the District focussing on Winchester Town. A further report will be made to this Committee with details of the strategic allocations required in the PUSH part of the District, focussing on Whiteley and Waterlooville. An additional meeting of this Committee has been arranged for Thursday 12 February 2009 at 10.00am to consider this further report.

- 3.2 Failure to make sufficient provision for the required housing provision will not only result in the Council being presented with planning applications for determination in an ad hoc fashion but also compliance with SEP requirements is one of the fundamental requisites of LDF documents being found sound when examined.

4 Strategic Allocations

- 4.1 With the changes introduced to the LDF system in June 2008, there is now an increasing emphasis on allocating 'strategic' sites for development in Core Strategies. The guidance is however clear that *"these should be those sites considered central to achievement of the strategy"*, and notes that core strategy progress should not be held up by the inclusion of non-strategic sites. Hence it is considered pertinent for the Winchester Core Strategy to allocate strategic sites in those spatial areas that are by their nature the more sustainable locations within the District such as Winchester Town and the M27 corridor urban areas which has a physical, economic and social relationship with the urban parts of southern Hampshire that lie beyond the Winchester District boundary.

5 Winchester Town development strategy and strategic allocations (Appendix A)

- 5.1 At its meeting on 16 December 2008 the Committee discussed the preferred approach for the development of Winchester Town and agreed-

"That a 'development with a purpose' option should be worked up to maximise the benefits and minimise the disadvantages of the previous options. This should be adopted as the preferred option for Winchester Town."

When judged against the other 'reasonable' alternatives this option is the best to enable Winchester Town to meet current and future social and economic objectives, by expressing the vision and aspirations of the Winchester District Strategic Partnership through spatial planning policy.

This option will need to identify a strategic site(s) to deliver the required development. Regardless of location, the Committee agreed at its last meeting that any site(s) must ensure that the following criteria are met:-

- The site(s) must be capable of providing the uses necessary to meet the town's needs, including a range of housing to meet local housing needs including 40% affordable housing;
- The site(s) must make a positive contribution towards meeting the economic development objectives of Winchester town and the sub-region; and contribute towards reducing commuting into and out of the town;
- The development of the site(s) must meet the highest standards of sustainable design and make a positive contribution towards addressing

climate change, and maximising the opportunity to generate on-site renewable energy

- The site(s) must be capable of mitigating its environmental impacts
- The site(s) must be capable of meeting its physical and social infrastructure requirements in a planned and timely fashion “.

- 5.2 The report acknowledged that to restrict development to within the built-up area of Winchester, as suggested by a significant number of responses through the ‘neither’ option, would result in substantial pressure on the rural area to provide housing and employment development, and/or measures to increase development within the existing boundary of Winchester. This would require the promotion of extremely high densities, development of open spaces and gardens, and use of non-residential sites for housing (employment, facilities, car parks). The inevitable consequence of adopting this alternative option would be to promote major housing and employment development in the rural area outside PUSH and/or to endorse major increases in density and land use changes within Winchester Town.
- 5.3 The ‘development with a purpose’ approach envisages a similar amount of greenfield housing development as Option 1 of the Issues and Options document, but with provision also for economic growth and other development to meet the needs of Winchester – i.e. growth with the purpose of meeting the various needs of the town, not just of meeting housing requirements. This would represent a chance for the town to fulfil its economic potential, and to develop in a planned and sustainable manner, which seeks to ensure that both the constraints offered by Winchester Town in terms of its sensitive environment and the vision and aspirations expressed by the Town Forum and the Winchester District Strategic Partnership are enabled to be delivered.
- 5.4 This approach does however require the release of a new greenfield site or sites. The four sites identified in the Issues and Options report have been examined in detailed and are discussed in full in Appendix A to this report, which concludes that any land in area 2 (around Teg Down), and most of the land in areas 3 and 4 (to the south and south west of the Town), should be precluded from further consideration due to significant environmental and access constraints. The options that remain therefore are;
- Development of 2,000 dwellings at Barton Farm together with supporting social and physical infrastructure, on land to the south of Well House Lane. This would require the identification of alternative locations to meet the economic development objectives
 - Development of 2,000 dwellings at Barton Farm together with limited employment, and supporting social and physical infrastructure together with the release of some of the land to the north of Well house Lane for strategic employment-led uses.

- Development of 500- 1,000 dwellings at Pitt Manor, together with 1,000- 1,500 dwellings at Barton Farm, with the remainder of the site at Barton Farm being allocated for a knowledge park.
 - Allocate Bushfield Camp for a knowledge park subject to overcoming the environmental constraints, with housing development at Barton Farm and/or Pitt.
- 5.5 At a Meeting of the Council on 7 January 2009, the Save Barton Farm Group presented a lengthy petition requesting that:-
- ‘the Council protect Barton Farm from massive development by omitting Barton Farm from the sites in the 2009 Preferred Options proposals for housing.’*
- 5.6 The relevant minutes of Council are set out at Appendix C to this report, and refer to a number of concerns being raised by the Group including the following:-
- Lack of infrastructure – particularly for traffic
 - Environmental issues including flooding and impact on the character of Winchester
- 5.7 These matters are covered in some detail in Appendix A to this report, but in summary the traffic impacts of 2000 dwellings at Barton Farm have been considered by two Inspectors and the Secretary of State and found to be acceptable. Similarly in terms of flooding it is acknowledged that no development will take place on that part of the site identified as being at risk of flooding by the Environment Agency and the development will include a full sustainable drainage system to not only mitigate against the risk of flooding but to provide wider environmental and biodiversity benefits. In terms of the impact on the character and setting of Winchester by restricting the development to the south of Well House Lane this will ensure that the landscape character in this area is protected and the setting of Winchester City retained.
- 5.8 Therefore on balance and when considered against all other reasonable alternatives its is recommended :-
- 1. That the development of the 2,000 houses required on greenfield sites at Winchester should be on a single site rather than split between several sites and that land at Barton Farm (to the south of Well House Lane), is allocated as the preferred site to develop approximately 2,000 dwellings together with supporting uses. The Core Strategy should include a set of development principles which seek to develop a new community which acts as an exemplar of sustainable development, and which reflects the outcome of the Sustainability Appraisal and sound planning principles.**

and

2. **To diversify the Winchester economy and to provide for longer term economic growth that the part of Bushfield Camp which has been previously occupied be explored as to its potential for economic uses through the creation of a 'knowledge park' and whether this is technically viable and deliverable. Any proposals on this site for economic purposes will be required to ensure that the remainder of the site comes forward for public use.**

5.9 General representations (Appendix B)

In addition to the previous reports made to this Committee on the range of topics and questions raised in the Issues and Options consultation, a number of more general comments were received. These by their nature are raising matters that refer generally to either the Core Strategy's preparation or content, and responses to these are set out in Appendix B.

6 RELEVANCE TO CORPORATE STRATEGY

- 6.1 The LDF is a key corporate priority and will contribute to achieving the Council's vision through the outcomes set out under various Corporate Strategy headings.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Meetings of the Committee can be serviced from within existing resources in the Democratic Services Division. The resources for undertaking work on the LDF have been approved as part of the budget process.

8 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- 8.1 Questionnaires and comments received in response to the Issues and Options consultation, held within the Strategic Planning Team. Summaries of the detailed responses received are displayed on the Council's web site: www.winchester.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planning/localdevelopmentframework

9 APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Winchester Town Strategic Allocations

Appendix B : General representations

Appendix C : Minutes of Council 7th January 2009 – Save Barton Farm Group - Petition